

North Carolina Cost Share Programs Review Summary
FY2021

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| County | Edgecombe | Date of Previous Review/Report | |
| District Staff Name(s) | Scott Kiser | Date | 12/9/2020 |
| NRCS Staff Name(s) | | | |
| Division Representative(s) | Lisa Fine, Eric Pare | | |
| Additional Participants | | | |

| Questions | Division Findings | | | | Division Comments | District Plan of Action Required | | SWCD Plan of Action | Proposed Timeline for Implementation | Division Response to Plan of Action (date) |
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| | Commendation | Recommendation | Corrective Action | No Concerns/ Not Applicable | | Yes | No | | | |
| Section 1: Application Procedures and Tracking Progress (BMP Implementation and Payments) Questions in this section focus on how the district advertises the program, how applications are developed, how contracts are developed, how funds are tracked and how the board approves each. | | | | | | | | | | |
| How/when are the district board meetings scheduled? | | | | X | The dates for the board meetings are set up at one time for the 2 nd Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. unless issues arise in scheduling. Sometimes the month of July is taken off. | | X | | | |
| How do you notify the public of the board meeting schedule? Does it adhere to the Open Meetings Law? | | | | X | The meeting notices are on the Facebook page and on a website rider on Edgecombe County’s homepage, it’s posted on the door to the district | | X | | | |

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| | | | | | office when not in Covid protocol, and it's posted down on the front door of the building. Currently board meetings are not in person. Yes, it adheres to Open Meetings Law. | | | | | |
| Please describe the district's process for providing assistance to applicants by assessing resource concerns to determine if a BMP is "needed and feasible" and then developing the conservation plan. | | | | X | Most cooperators approach Scott for assistance the rest come from issues being seen and someone complaining about it. Scott then goes to complete a site visit and meet with the farmer, if it's a resource concern that they want to get assistance with. From that, Scott gets the application and score it and move on with planning and design process. | | X | | | |
| Does the district provide technical assistance without cost share funds? | | | | X | Yes. | | X | | | |
| What type of technical assistance is provided without cost share funds? | | | | X | The district is involved in drainage issues, erosion control, critical area plantings, soil quality, drain tile, and since Hurricane Matthew they have done work with crossings and pipe sizing. | | X | | | |
| How does the district prioritize which applicants get funded? Do you prioritize certain watersheds, BMPs, type of operation, first come - first served, etc? | | | | X | The district prioritizes HEL. Applicants get bonus points for that and being in the Tar Pam watershed. The scoring system is associated with the term of practice – the longer the practice is the more focus it gets. | | X | | | |

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| Once each application is considered, what does the district do with the score? Do you fund based on the score, use another system to prioritize, create eligibility categories, or other? | | | | X | The district uses the score to fund contracts. | | X | | | |
| Describe the process the district follows when there is a tie on applicants' scores. | | | | X | The district uses the date of application to break ties. | | X | | | |
| Does the district purposefully withhold a percentage of funds until a later date in the program year to be able to fund higher quality projects (more water quality or water quantity benefits) or does the district fund applications until it runs out of funding each batching period? Does the district automatically fund cooperators who applied but did not get funded in the previous program year due to lack of funds or does it re-rank them with new applications? | X | | | | <p>The district holds back 30% of their funds until February batching period. This has worked for the district so far in that they are able to cover applications on hand and anything that comes in later in the year.</p> <p>Commendation: the district should be commended for following the written priority system and having a way to fund contracts that may come in later in the year but be worse water quality issues than previously submitted.</p> <p>The district re-ranks all applications again and does not automatically fund carry overs.</p> | | X | | | |

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| Are applications, contracts and requests for payments reviewed and approved by the Board as a separate action item? | | | | X | Yes. | | X | | | |
| Are application, contracts and requests for payments motions/decisions recorded in the board minutes? | | | | X | Yes. | | X | | | |
| Has your district delegated signature authority for requests for payments to be approved outside of board meetings? How are they recorded in your board meeting minutes? | | | | X | Yes, the primary signatory is Alton Skinner because he is the closest to the office and the chair is out sick. The alternate is Vice-Chair Harold Thompson. The district signs a large number (90%) of RFPs outside of board meetings. Yes, they are recorded as being signed outside of board meetings on the minutes. | | X | | | |
| Applicants are limited when applying for incentive BMPs. How does your district track applicants so they do not go over the practice caps and to be sure they haven't already "adopted" the practice? | | | | X | Scott has a spreadsheet/database of applicants and amounts that goes way back in time. He is familiar with the farmers in the county, calls Nash or Halifax when needed to check usage there, contacts FSA office when needed. | | X | | | |
| If multiple partners farm together, how does the district track individual applicants as one operation or entity? | | | | X | Scott knows the farmers, has FSA as a primary check and board members as a second check because they know the county. | | X | | | |


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| | Commendation | Recommendation | Corrective Action | No Concerns/ Not Applicable | | Yes | No | | | |
| At what point in the application process does the district develop the contract? (After Ranking, After Application Approved?) Describe this process. | | | | X | Scott receives the application, it's ranked, he completes the site visit, does the RUSLE2 work, puts the plan together enters into CS2, takes it to the board, sometimes contracts will need to be deleted if they don't get approved or are found ineligible later in the process. | | X | | | |
| Describe how the district reviews the contract with the applicant. Do you explain that work cannot begin until the contract is approved by the division? | | | | X | Scott takes the paperwork out or the applicant comes into the office and he goes over everything. Yes, he explains the obligations, what district will provide, maintenance period, appropriate BMPs and cost share they will receive. | | X | | | |
| What procedures do you follow for notifying the applicant that work can begin? | | | | X | The district sends the cooperator a letter explaining what is required and that work can begin. I reviewed a copy of this letter. | | X | | | |
| Describe the district/board's procedure for approving supervisor contracts. | | | | X | No points are given or taken away for supervisors. They are ranked the same as others and abstain from voting on any contract with which they have an interest. | | X | | | |
| Is it documented in the Board minutes that the supervisor abstained from discussing his/her own contract and from voting? | | | | X | Yes, it was documented in the minutes that a supervisor abstained in the 10/13/2015 meeting minutes. That was the last meeting where a supervisor contract was approved. | | X | | | |


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| | Commendation | Recommendation | Corrective Action | No Concerns/ Not Applicable | | Yes | No | | | |
| Is each contract reviewed in detail with the board before approval? Do you project CS2? | | | | X | Yes, the contracts are gone over in detail. Scott has projected CS2 before but not regularly. | | X | | | |
| What information do you provide the applicant? | X | | | | The applicant is provided a copy of the contract, job sheets, maps conservation plan, any design items. Scott has some district specific items he created to help out farmers/contractors. Commendation: the district is commended for taking extra steps to ensure the contract is installed correctly and in a timely manner. | | X | | | |
| What technical assistance do you provide during the BMP installation process to ensure the BMP is installed correctly and by the contract deadline? | | | | X | Scott will get in there and help with anything they need help with. He will lay out the waterway and offer help and they will accept or not. He then checks on progress as they install. | | X | | | |
| How do you track the Commission’s interim performance milestone? One-third of the work must be completed within 12 months of division approval. Are you using CS2? | | X | | | Scott uses CS2 – looks in there before every board meeting for active contracts. Recommendation: the district should add a column to their spreadsheet to be able to see when the date is approaching easily. | X | | Add column as recommended. | Immediately | Plan of Action Accepted |
| If 1/3 of the work has not been completed within 12 months and the cooperator requests additional time, is the district recording 6-month extensions in the board minutes? | X | | | | Yes, the district records 6-month extensions. None in recent history. The district has a permanent item on their agenda for the 1/3 rule – if there is any contract that falls into that category they will have it on the | | X | | | |


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| | Commendation | Recommendation | Corrective Action | No Concerns/ Not Applicable | | Yes | No | | | |
| | | | | | agenda. Commendation: having this on the agenda permanently is a great way to track progress and make sure contracts are being looked at for completion dates. | | | | | |
| What documentation do you include in the contract file that certifies that the BMP was inspected and is installed to the standards? | | | | X | Generally, notes are put in the 6 notes. Sometimes a practice will have a good job sheet to use and he uses that form. | | X | | | |
| Are BMPs measured then certified before the request for payment is approved? How is this documented? | | | | X | Yes, very few results in something needing measured. He checks the acreage and installation. If not as planned then he will create an “as built” document. | | X | | | |
| Section 2: Spot Checks and Compliance Issues Questions in this section focus on how the district reviews BMPs for compliance and how maintenance and/or non-compliance issues are addressed. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Are all BMPs under the waste management category spot checked for the first five years after installation? This applies to all farms that fall under the thresholds that are regulated by DWR. | | | | X | Yes. They are on a contract list separated so he can look at the date so he can know when they need spot checked. | | X | | | |
| How does the district notify the NRCS area office or division to conduct spot checks for contracts that need to be spot checked by someone outside of the district? (Refer to Spot Check Policy) | | | | X | If NRCS didn’t ask first, he would contact them. Recently, NRCS has been asking. NRCS has been doing the spot checks. | | X | | | |


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| | Commendation | Recommendation | Corrective Action | No Concerns/ Not Applicable | | Yes | No | | | |
| How does your district notify individuals that have BMPs that are out of compliance or need maintenance? (Refer to Non-Compliance Policy) | | | | X | Scott sends them a letter. | | X | | | |
| How are supervisors notified of BMPs that are out of compliance or need maintenance at any time throughout the year? | | | | X | Supervisors are notified at the next board meeting. | | X | | | |
| Does the district provide a written notice that the BMP must be repaired or re-implemented within 30 working days? (Vegetative practices have to be reestablished within one calendar year.) Is a copy of the notification kept in the contract file? | | | | X | Yes, the district is notified in writing. Yes, there is a copy in the contract file. I was provided a copy during the office review. | | X | | | |
| If the BMP was not repaired or re-implemented, was repayment requested? Please provide documentation: contract numbers and/or names. | | | | X | Yes, there has been documentation of a repayment for 33-2002-034. I found it on a past program review. | | X | | | |
| Is the district notifying the division of non-compliance and resolutions? | | | | X | Yes, for spot checks. District is aware they need to contact the division with any non-compliance whether found during the official spot checks or otherwise. | | X | | | |
| Section 3: Record Keeping Questions in this section focus on how funds are managed and accounted for, maintaining proper design and job approval authority, as well as disclosure forms. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Do you use the CS2 reports to show the board available program funds, encumbrances and expenditures? | | | | X | Yes, the district has used CS2 to show funding but does not use it at every board meeting. He uses it at the meetings where they do batching of funds. | | X | | | |
| How are technical assistance and operating funds tracked? Are they audited? What is the date of the last audit? Who performed the audit? | | | | X | All funds go to the county and are audited. I reviewed a memo from the County Finance office stating that | | X | | | |


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| | Commendation | Recommendation | Corrective Action | No Concerns/ Not Applicable | | Yes | No | | | |
| | | | | | funds were audited and found to be OK. The audit was at the end of the last fiscal year. An outside CPA firm conducted the audit. | | | | | |
| Who in the office does work for Cost Share Programs? | | | | X | Scott Kiser. There are currently no NRCS folks helping in the district. | | X | | | |
| Is proper job approval authority (JAA) documented for each technical and cost share position? Please provide a copy of the latest approved JAA. (Print a copy of what is in the data base. Does it match the district's version?) | | | | X | I received a copy of the JAA for Scott during the review. It matches the division copy. | | X | | | |


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| Section 4: Contract Reviews and Site Visits Below is a list of the contracts the division reviewed. Spot checks were also conducted. Notes include recommendations and/or corrective action for contract files as well as the BMP. Contracts/BMPs are listed by contract number. | | | | | | | | | | |
| Contract Number: 33-2016-002 Applicant Name: Joseph Suggs BMP: cropland conversion to grass  | | | | X | NOTE: The district should make sure they have a signed conservation plan in the file. No concerns with the BMP. | | X | | | |

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| Contract Number: 33-2011-501 Applicant Name: Blount Bridges BMP: cistern  | | | | X | No concerns with contract. No concerns with the BMPs. | | X | | | |

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| Contract Number: 33-2017-006 Applicant Name: LizCo BMP: AgWRAP well  | | | | X | No concerns with the contract file. No concerns with the BMPs. | | X | | | |

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| | Commendation | Recommendation | Corrective Action | No Concerns/ Not Applicable | | Yes | No | | | |
| <p>Contract Number: 33-2011-006 Applicant Name: Craig Godwin BMP: cropland conversion to trees</p>  | | | | X | <p>No concerns with the contract file.</p> <p>No concerns with the BMPs.</p> | | X | | | |

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| | Commendation | Recommendation | Corrective Action | No Concerns/ Not Applicable | | Yes | No | | | |
| <div>Contract Number: 33-2019-003</div> <div>Applicant Name: Mark Shaw</div> <div>BMP: cropland conversion to grass</div> <div></div> | | | | X | <div>No concerns with the contract file.</div> <div>No concerns with the BMPs.</div> | | X | | | |

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| | Commendation | Recommendation | Corrective Action | No Concerns/ Not Applicable | | Yes | No | | | |
| Contract Number: 33-2014-001 Applicant Name: Donald Brake BMP: litter spreader  | | | | X | No concerns with the contract file. No concerns with the BMPs. | | X | | | |